

A12 OPINION

Wednesday, December 2, 2015 » MORE AT [FACEBOOK.COM/DAILYBRI](https://www.facebook.com/dailybreeze)

Editorial

12-2-15

Fostering our state's neediest kids with love

Daily Breeze

It takes no more than common sense to know that children raised in a real family — whether by birth, by adoption or by fostering — stand a better chance of physical and emotional good health into adulthood than those shunted into group homes, no matter the good intents of the operators.

Yet California has about 5,800 foster youth living in large group homes, with an alarming 1,000 of them having been placed in this unnatural environment for more than five of the most formative years of their lives.

Now, after three years of work by a team of 25 state employees dedicated full time to making changes to the system, under a new law taking effect in January, the state's Department of Social Services will begin a multiyear plan to replace privately run group homes with "short-term residential treatment centers," where youth will mostly stay no more than six months.

The plan, detailed recently by Karen de Sá of our sister paper the San Jose Mercury News, the same reporter whose investigation "Drugging Our Kids" found that foster youth in group homes are the most likely to be prescribed excessive amounts of psychotropic medications, with more than half receiving court-approved prescriptions, is an ambitious one. Even its most ardent backers acknowledge that the problem is large and complicated and that just waving a legal wand will not make it so. That's because each child in the system comes with familial and social problems of her or his own. Simply decrying the warehousing of troubled kids gets us nowhere toward a world in which every child would be raised in a loving environment with the same chances for success in life as their peers lucky enough to grow up with their parents

in a stable household.

Some, perhaps most, group-home operators are not in their line of work — and it is a business, with state government dollars paid out for every child taken in — because it's an easy path to riches. It is not. And the terrifying stories in recent years of appalling abuses of children in some group homes need to be understood in the context of there still being far too few beds available anywhere in the system. Even though previous state law has mandated that children taken from parents or guardians for their own safety must be placed in foster care within 24 hours, the fact remains that some have stayed in massive holding rooms — some in downtown Los Angeles high-rises — for days while social workers scramble to find better options. For the hardest to place, including infants and large groups of siblings, a Los Angeles Times investigation showed that over 100 telephone calls and other contacts must be made by social workers.

The legislation that will go into effect next month was well-planned by experts in the field. In theory, at least, the neediest children in California will live in "short-term residential treatment centers" where youth will mostly stay no more than six months. But for the program to truly reach success, more California families interested in fostering or adopting young people whose lives hang in the balance must step up and welcome them into their real homes. The solution, as ever, lies with us.

Meeting adjourned in memory of



PHOTOS BY KEITH DÜRFELINGER — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Margarita Galvez, right, the mother of slain Downey police Officer Ricardo Galvez, cries as she receives the flag that was draped over her son's casket during the graveside service at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier on Monday.

Downey police lay slain officer to rest

THOUSANDS SAY GOODBYE AT DOWNTOWN L.A. CATHEDRAL

By David Montero
david.montero@langnews.com
 @DaveMontero on Twitter

They came from New York and Chicago. Orange County and Indio. Thousands of officers and deputies in crisp uniforms and many wearing white gloves. They stood in solid, solemn blocks of blue and gray in the downtown Los Angeles cathedral. A tight line of U.S.

Marines in dress blues stared straight ahead.

About 3,000 filled the wood pews Monday morning behind Margarita, Sandra, Nancy and Pedro. Margarita Galvez wore sunglasses and sat 10 feet from her son's casket draped in white pall. The two sisters and brother of slain Downey police Officer Ricardo Galvez listened to high-ranking officials who ordinarily wouldn't have occasion to pay such direct atten-

tion to them.

Los Angeles Archbishop Jose Gomez addressed the Galvez family. So did Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey. The mayor of Downey spoke to them in English and Spanish. Downey Police Chief Carl Charles said he was nervous about delivering the eulogy and had been working on it since Nov. 19. That was the day after Galvez was shot and killed in

GALVEZ » PAGE 6

Galvez

FROM PAGE 1

the parking lot of his department's headquarters.

Charles had never done this before. The last time a Downey police officer had been killed was in 1981 — five years before Galvez had even been born. And among

the 110 officers in the department, Galvez was well-loved.

"I wanted it to be just right," Charles said. "It had to be."



Galvez

Gomez, who presided over the funeral Mass for Galvez, walked up to the family sitting in the front row of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels and tried to provide them a measure of truth and a dose of comfort.

"There is no doubt the pain is going to be with us forever," Gomez said. "Ricky's life will be always present in our lives if we commit ourselves once again to peace and truth and love in our community."

And then the casket was rolled out. The family trailed slowly behind it as they prepared to go to Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier for his burial.



Members of the Downey Police Honor Guard carry the casket of Officer Ricardo Galvez at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier. Police officers from around the country attended.

Selfless and humble

The 29-year-old Galvez was remembered at the Mass as a selfless, humble and loving man who once paid the car registration for a woman he'd cited for the infraction after she told him she couldn't afford it.

But he could also be a bit of a joker among friends in the department.

His good friend Andrew Lofquist, who was asked by the family to give a eulogy at the funeral, talked about how Galvez often quoted lines from movies, his favorite being "End of Watch." It could sometimes induce eye

rolls, Lofquist said.

There were also precious few occasions Galvez didn't feel comfortable joking around with Lofquist.

"We sat next to each other at morning briefings, and he tried to hold my hand under the desk," Lofquist said. "I'd pull it away and he'd say, 'Stupid man.' Then he'd try to hold my hand again. I wouldn't let him. He'd say, 'You changed, bro.'"

The crowd laughed.

"Ricky could guilt anybody into doing anything just by saying that — 'You changed, bro,'" Lofquist said.

But that was the one common theme that ran

throughout remembrances of Galvez: He didn't really change much. Polite, smiling, generous and thoughtful were words uttered more than a few times by those who knew him.

Charles said he remembered Galvez presented him with an American flag used during his second tour of duty as a U.S. Marine. He said Galvez thanked him and the department for letting him serve in the military.

"Of course he was the one who should have received the appreciation for his service," Charles said. "That is a gift I shall treasure forever."

Deacon Mario Guerra said Galvez set a goal of buying a home for his mother, which he accomplished recently. He said he took care of others and alluded to the Gospel reading invoking the Good Shepherd from the Book of John.

"Ricky answered the call," Guerra said. "He answered the call to serve and to be there for others."

It was all they could do in the wake of the chaotic act that ended with Galvez's death in the department's parking lot.

Bagpipes at gravesite

Everything at the gravesite was measured with precision, perfection and order. Before the 20-minute service started, bagpipes practiced off to the side to get the U.S. Marine Corps' hymn right. Burbank Police Sgt. Chris Canales softly worked the notes to taps nearby and said that even though he'd been playing trumpet since he was in grade school and currently played in a blues band called Chico's Bail Bonds, there was a lot of pressure for an event like this.

"I'll do my best," he said.

The Los Angeles Police Department Honor Guard's seven riflemen stood stiff and only moved when ordered, sharp and quick. The entire Downey Police Department of 110 sworn officers stood in unbroken rows.

Charles said the departments of South Gate, Montebello and Whittier were answering calls in Downey so the entire force could be there.

When the casket arrived, police and Marines marched in double time to the hearse. The family sat in the front row near the flag-draped casket. Above, the LAPD Air Support Division did a missing man formation with four helicopters. Between the moments with the bagpipes, the bugle and the volleys fired by the rifle unit, the air was still and the crowd of more than 1,500 was largely silent.

Galvez's mother sobbed when 1st Sgt. Patrick McClellan presented her with the flag. She buried her face in it. She wiped her tears with it. Galvez's brother was already crying after taps played without a hitch. Charles presented Margarita Galvez a second flag on behalf of the department.

She cried harder.

LAPD Cmdr. Anne Clark said the family was supposed to stay for a private burial, but Galvez's mother was so overcome after people came to console her, she had to be helped away while Mariachi Aguilas de Mexico played "Despedida con Mariachi."

The crowd lingered and put roses on the casket, and the Downey Police Department left for a private wake.

Now just 109 of them.

CRIME

12-1-15 Daily Br

Ex-sheriff's deputies are headed to prison

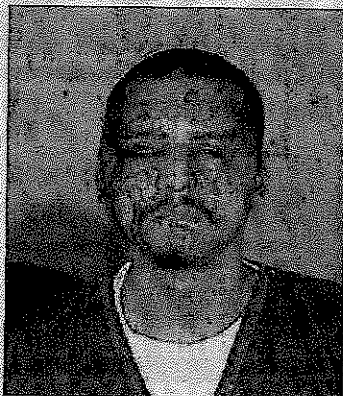
Two sentenced in beating of handcuffed man at county jail

By Fred Shuster
City News Service

Two former Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies were sentenced Monday to federal prison terms for their roles in the beating of a handcuffed man in a jail visitor center and the falsification of official reports used to cover up the assault, events a judge dubbed "a practiced course of conduct" within the walls.

Fernando Luviano was sentenced to seven years behind bars, while Sussie Ayala was handed a six-year sentence following June convictions for criminal civil rights offenses stemming from the assault on Gabriel Carrillo on Feb. 26, 2011, at the Men's Central Jail.

U.S. District Judge George



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This undated evidence photo provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office shows a mug shot of Gabriel Carrillo taken by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

King rejected attempts by defense attorneys to have their clients remain free for the holidays, and ordered both defendants taken immediately into custody.

King said 30-year-old Ayala

was the prime "instigator" of the Carrillo assault since she used her radio to call for Luviano and other deputies to a private break room where the victim was severely beaten. Carrillo was restrained with both hands behind his back.

Ayala, Luviano, their supervisor and others "colluded, conspired and agreed" in reports to falsely blame Carrillo for attacking them, the judge said. Carrillo was then charged by the district attorney's office as a result of the phony reports and Luviano and others perjured themselves on the witness stand in the victim's preliminary hearing. Later, when the truth came out, Carrillo's charges were dismissed.

Although no evidence showed Ayala helped in the beating, "she is by no means a minor participant" in the attack, King said.

In pre-sentencing papers, defense attorney Patrick Smith argued for no more than an 18-month probationary sentence

for Ayala, urging the court not to lump his client "in with a group of testosterone-filled deputies," some of whom have "extensive use-of-force histories."

Ayala declined to speak to the court.

Luviano, 37, seen as the most violent of Carrillo's attackers, tearfully apologized to the victim — who did not attend Monday's sentencing hearing in the downtown Los Angeles courthouse.

The ex-deputy said he was sorry "for the injuries he suffered," telling the judge that the attack was not intentional.

However, King found that Luviano has a history of previous violent behavior towards jail inmates and showed "total disrespect for the law" by lying at Carrillo's preliminary hearing.

Luviano's behavior "showed an attitude of being above the law," the judge said, adding that the former deputy "has been hovering around the edge of

DEPUTIES » PAGE 12

Deputies

FROM PAGE 3

criminal behavior" since his 20s.

In court papers, Luviano defense counsel Bernard Rosen unsuccessfully argued for an 18-month sentence split evenly between federal prison and community placement or home detention.

Rosen said he will appeal on behalf of his client.

Carrillo was attacked after he mouthed off to guards who found him carrying a cellphone in the waiting area, which is a violation of jail regulations. Jail guards Ayala, Luviano, now-imprisoned sheriff's Sgt. Eric Gonzalez and others then conspired to lie about the assault on internal use-of-force reports.

The assault and follow-up seemed like a "practiced... orchestrated use-of-force" that occurred with some regularity in the visitor center, King said Monday.

The deputies "readily participated" in creating false reports, suggesting "this was hardly a one-time incident," but "a practiced course of conduct," the judge said.

During a weeklong trial, two other ex-jail dep-

uties -- Neal Womack and Pantamitr Zunggeemoge -- testified for the prosecution against their former partners, saying the beat-down inflicted on Carrillo was excessive, illegal and entirely unnecessary. Both men pleaded guilty and await sentencing.

Prosecutors said that during the 45-second assault in a private break room, Luviano and others threw Carrillo -- both hands handcuffed behind his back -- to the ground and then punched and pepper-sprayed him.

Afterward, Luviano, Ayala and their supervisor "huddled" to figure out a way to justify the use of force in order to complete a "probable cause declaration," a document used to explain an official use of violence, federal prosecutors said.

Prosecutors had filed papers in support of a five-year prison sentence for Ayala -- the judge gave her that plus an additional year -- and between seven and nine years behind bars for Luviano.

Ayala, who was 25 years old at the time of the assault, was an "impressionable... low-level, relatively inexperienced deputy," according to her attorney.

As for Luviano, Assistant U.S. Attorney Lizabeth Rhodes argued in court papers that the de-

fendant deserved a harsh sentence for his part in the Carrillo attack.

Luviano, Rhodes wrote, has a history of violence and was "frequently involved in significant force" incidents while working on the jail's "3000 floor," a place reserved for the most dangerous inmates and known for frequent clashes between deputies and prisoners.

The third defendant convicted at trial alongside Luviano and Ayala, Gonzalez, was sentenced Nov. 2 to eight years in federal prison for encouraging deputies to beat Carrillo and falsify reports.

Gonzalez also was taken into custody immediately after he was sentenced by King, who told the defendant he had "abused his authority and corrupted the very system he was sworn to uphold."

Carrillo at one point faced trial and a potential 14-year jail sentence on fabricated charges stemming from the phony reports. He was paid \$1.2 million by the county last year to settle a civil rights lawsuit.

Byron Dredd, the sixth former deputy in the Carrillo case, was indicted last month on federal charges for his alleged involvement in falsifying internal reports.

12-1-15
L.A. COUNTY

Sheriff to release info on deputy shootings

Cases since 2010 to include
complaints and discipline

By Sarah Favot

sarah.favot@langnews.com
@sarahfavot on Twitter

Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell said Monday the department will release information on deputy-involved shootings for the past five years as well as data on use of force, public complaints and employee discipline.



McDonnell

McDonnell said the information is being released as part of an effort to be more transparent with the public about department activities.

"Our goal is to be able to release one of the nation's most comprehensive data sets from a law enforcement entity," McDonnell said.

McDonnell made his announcement on the eve of his one-year anniversary as sheriff in an interview with the Los Angeles News Group.

In an effort to be more transparent, McDonnell announced Monday the launch of the Comprehensive Transparency Project in which he will share information on deputy-involved shootings from 2010 to the present. Information published also will include use of force, public complaints and employee discipline. The data will not contain the names of the deputies involved.

The sheriff also appointed a chief data officer for the department, which he believes is the first such position in a law enforcement agency.

In a statement, Supervisor Michael Antonovich praised McDonnell's efforts to be more transparent with the public.

"Sheriff McDonnell has been a breath of fresh air for the depart-

MacDonnell

FROM PAGE 1

ment," Antonovich said. "His leadership has brought a new vision of strong, effective law enforcement services, on a firm foundation of accountability and transparency."

McDonnell plans to speak to the news media today about his first year in office.

In the interview with the Los Angeles News Group, McDonnell also reflected on the vastness of his role as sheriff of the nation's most populous county.

The sheriff is responsible for policing 42 contract cities and the county's unincorporated areas, day-to-day operations of the country's largest jail system, security and bailiff services for the county's court system, safety and security for community college districts and search-and-rescue missions more than 42 miles of coastline and rugged mountain terrain that reaches Mount Baldy's peak.

"The thing that's most impressive is just the unique responsibilities of this organization," McDonnell said. "I don't know that there's a more challenging place to work."

McDonnell took office a year ago today as Los Angeles County's 32nd sheriff in a decisive win over former Undersheriff Paul Tanaka, who in May was indicted in a federal corruption case. McDonnell was the first sheriff chosen from outside the

12/2/15
ranks of the department in more than a century.

The former Long Beach police chief and longtime Los Angeles police officer, who rose the ranks to become the second-in-command under Chief William Bratton, was elected on a reform agenda. He pledged to "restore the confidence of our community in the integrity and operation of the LASD and resurrect a sense of pride in all who work in the department," according to a statement on his campaign website, which has since been taken offline.

Reforms

One challenge that underscores the reform effort underway is news of past criminal wrongdoing by deputy sheriffs that continues to reverberate throughout the media. On Monday, two former deputies were sentenced to six- and seven-year prison terms for beating a handcuffed visitor to Men's Central Jail in 2011 and trying to cover it up. More than a dozen former sheriff's officials have been convicted of obstruction charges and other crimes in a wide-ranging FBI investigation into brutality in the county jails.

Though those incidents didn't happen under his watch, McDonnell said when a light is shined on wrongdoing involving the Sheriff's Department, it affects the employees.

"We continue to just push forward holding our people accountable to the highest standard and moving beyond what happened in the

past," McDonnell said.

McDonnell reached a settlement agreement with the Justice Department, which includes federal court monitoring, in regards to the suicide prevention and excessive use of force in the county jails.

Oversight

During his campaign, McDonnell said he supported civilian oversight of the Sheriff's Department and giving access to records allowable under the law to the department's inspector general, Max Huntsman.

So far, those efforts are still in the works. However, McDonnell said he and Huntsman have reached a memorandum of agreement that will come before the Board of Supervisors for approval in coming weeks.

"Our hope is he's going to get everything he needs to do the job the way he wants to, and we're being as transparent as legally permissible," McDonnell said.

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas' chief deputy also said Monday the supervisor plans to bring a motion in January that would move the establishment of the Civilian Oversight Commission forward. The supervisors heard a recommendation in July from the working group they established to study the oversight commission. No public action has been taken since.

Mark-Anthony Johnson, of Dignity and Power Now, an activist group that has been pushing for civilian oversight, said the first half of the year was productive in

terms of collaborating with the working group but that the transparent process has stalled.

"For us this is a problem," he said. "We know that things take time. At the same time, a year is a long time for our folks to be vulnerable to a lack of transparency and a lack of accountability."

Understaffed

One challenge McDonnell faces is an understaffed department, according to the union representing deputy sheriffs.

"Everything else our department needs operationally is wholly dependent on the sheriff recruiting, training and deploying qualified deputies," Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs President George Hofstetter said in a statement.

"The challenge to hire sufficient numbers of new deputy sheriffs is made even more difficult because virtually every other large police agency in California is also desperately trying to hire more sworn personnel," Hofstetter added.

McDonnell launched a recruitment effort in the spring and pledged to hire deputies with a strong moral compass. The federal settlement with the Justice Department has required him to increase staffing levels in the jail system, which he said the department should have been at to begin with. To fulfill the staffing requirements, the sheriff has implemented mandatory overtime for deputies.

L.A. COUNTY

Supervisors to consider more controls over group homes

By Sarah Favot

sarah.favot@latimes.com
@sarahfavot on Twitter

Prompted by an audit that found certain group homes for children who must be removed from their homes had "significantly less" oversight than other group homes, the county supervisors Tuesday are expected to consider more controls over these facilities.

The Los Angeles County Auditor-Controller released the audit two weeks ago in response to a tip to the county's fraud hotline about a group home that does not have a contract with the county. The Department of Children and Family Services places children in "non-contracted" group homes if

GROUP HOMES » PAGE 8

Group Homes

FROM PAGE 3

the child cannot be placed with a relative and there is not space available at a group home that has a county contract.

However, county auditors could not fully investigate the allegations made against the unidentified group home where 11 children were placed as of May. The group home's management would not give county auditors access to financial documents and because the county doesn't have a contract with the group home, the auditors could not compel the group home to hand over the documents. The county auditor referred the allegations to the state, which oversees the group home.

The auditor made a number of recommendations to strengthen oversight and controls over these non-contracted group homes.

Supervisors Sheila Kuehl and Michael Antonovich will ask the board Tuesday to approve implementation of those recommendations, including creating a new placement agreement with these group homes with program and fiscal requirements. Another recommendation is that non-contracted group homes only be used on a temporary basis until a child can be placed somewhere else.

In response to the audit, DCFS said it "generally" agreed with the recommendations and launched a corrective action plan to implement the recommendations by March.

As of May, 41 children were placed in 17 group homes that did not have a contract with the county.

Most of the children in non-contracted group homes are non-verbal, the supervisors wrote in their motion.

The audit also found that the county had missed out on \$400,000 to \$700,000 in state reimbursements last year in payments to these group homes.

Without the ability to look into the financial statements of the group homes, there is "no assurance county funds are being used appropriately for the care of placed children," the auditors wrote. The group home where the allegations were made charged \$9,302 per month per child, the second-highest rate classification in the state, without providing a clear justification for the fees.

The auditors also found in many cases social workers were not following procedures to place children in non-contracted group homes and DCFS management had not approved many of the placements.

The county's Children's Group Home Ombudsman visited the group home in question and found that the children "expressed no concerns" and seemed content. Some physical conditions of the facility were of concern, like a smoke detector that was disconnected and exposed wires. The group home executive director said they were preparing to paint.

The auditors found a single social worker was approving the placements at this group home without oversight. The auditors found there was no "evidence of overt misconduct" but said "allowing a single employee to make placement decisions presents a serious internal control weakness."

In its response to the audit, DCFS said it would reinforce policies and conduct training.

COMMENTARY

Call to action on sex trafficking of underage girls

By Dianne Feinstein

Sex trafficking of underage girls — often as young as 12 — is one of the most repulsive crimes imaginable, but it's part of a multibillion-dollar underground industry in our state.

To combat this repugnant crime, we need to take tangible action on the local, state and federal level to punish traffickers and buyers and help the victims.

Carrie, a 21-year-old Los Angeles native, tells us about the type of criminals we're dealing with.

When Carrie was 14, she ran away from home to escape an abusive stepfather. Carrie soon met a trafficker who held her captive for seven years, selling her for sex, beating and torturing her.

When Carrie was 17, she attempted suicide. At one point, Carrie's trafficker held a gun to her head; she jumped from a

moving car to escape death.

Carrie has been arrested on prostitution charges in Los Angeles, Sacramento and Orange Counties, and is covered in tattoos meant to show she is someone's property.

Today Carrie's trafficker is serving 30 years in prison and she's getting help, but there are still thousands and thousands of girls being abused across the country.

Sex trafficking is a \$99 billion industry, the second-largest criminal enterprise behind drugs. And California is one of the top destination states for trafficking victims, with Los Angeles a central hub.

A number of factors have contributed to the rise of sex trafficking. The first is increased demand. Those who buy these girls for sex are rarely prosecuted, even though many know the girls are underage and being held against their will. The Internet has also fueled demand. Second, victims like Carrie

have long been charged as prostitutes rather than offered the help a young girl needs to build a new life. This creates a vicious cycle that drives girls back into the clutches of their abusers.

Third, the number of homeless, vulnerable children has skyrocketed.

The good news is that real progress is being made in Los Angeles. Sheriff Jim McDonnell and I convened a meeting in August with law enforcement, public officials and advocates to discuss how we can fight trafficking. There was consensus that this problem is growing quickly and meaningful action must be taken to address it.

The Board of Supervisors, with the support of Sheriff McDonnell, passed a resolution recognizing that child trafficking victims like Carrie are victims, not prostitutes.

Sheriff McDonnell has also partnered with the FBI, Department of Homeland Security,

LAPD Chief Charlie Beck, District Attorney Jackie Lacey, U.S. Attorney Eileen Decker and regional colleagues to launch a task force to better coordinate investigations and rescue operations, and connect victims to services.

This month, U.S. Attorney Eileen Decker secured the first federal conviction of such a buyer in the Los Angeles area. Charles Goswitz, a 59-year-old man from Torrance, was sentenced to 57 months in federal prison after he purchased sex from a 16-year-old trafficking victim.

To reduce demand, prosecutions of buyers must be made a priority at all levels of the justice system. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, signed into law by President Obama in May, removes barriers to federal prosecutions of these individuals. U.S. attorneys in California should use these new tools to bring cases against these criminals.

The bill also included a provision that makes it a federal felony to knowingly "advertise" a minor for commercial sex acts. This new law enables the Department of Justice to crack down on sites that profit from advertising the sexual exploitation of children. These websites should be shut down for advertising minors for sex, and the question I have posed to the department is "Why haven't they been?"

We need to do much more to address youth homelessness, one of the root causes of the trafficking epidemic.

A key step is passing bipartisan legislation Sen. Rob Portman and I introduced, the Homeless Children and Youth Act. The bill would make it easier for young people living in motels and couch surfing to get help from local nonprofits like Covenant House California.

U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein represents California.